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Shultz Taking No New Proposals to Soviets on Medium-Range Arms

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Secretary of State George P. Shultz is taking no new proposals to Moscow on the issue of medium-range nuclear missiles in Europe, and will instead seek a detailed Soviet response to the draft U.S. treaty presented to the Soviets in Geneva early last month, U.S. officials said yesterday.

Although the medium-range missile issue is widely viewed as the most promising topic of discussion for Shultz's meetings with Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze and other Soviet leaders next Monday through Wednesday, Shultz will also explore other arms control issues, as well as regional disputes and human rights, the officials said.

"We expect to discuss . . . all areas of arms control," Shultz said at a news conference yesterday.

He said these include medium-range missiles, strategic arms, ballistic missile defenses, chemical weapons, nuclear testing and conventional arms.

A senior White House official said President Reagan "would like to see him [Shultz] come back with an indication that the prospects for an arms control agreement on some scale were good."

The official, without disclosing the secretary of state's specific instructions, said he expected that Shultz would bring up proposed U.S. limitations on shorter-range missiles in Europe, which have been a major topic of disagreement in the ongoing negotiations for a treaty governing nuclear arms in Europe.

"But strategic weapons are the major threat," the White House official said, adding that "I fully expect progress" in this area.

Although Shultz said that recent disclosures of Soviet spying in the U.S. Embassy in Moscow would "cast a heavy shadow on our discussions," the White House official said the flap was not expected to have much impact on Shultz's visit.

The official reiterated the president's statement Tuesday that the administration will not let the spying issue get in the way of arms control.

Shultz told the news conference that his instructions for the meeting came out of a "full systematic review of all the issues under the president's direction" by the National Security Council. But several U.S. officials familiar with the proceedings of NSC meetings Tuesday and last Friday to discuss

the instructions said various agency representatives were at odds on most key issues, and that final decisions were made by Reagan and senior White House officials.

The medium-range missile issue was described as one of the few areas in which the administration quickly achieved a consensus. Shortly after a Soviet announcement in February to seek agreement on the issue without regard to continuing disputes over strategic arms and ballistic missile defenses, U.S. negotiators presented a draft treaty that has yet to elicit a detailed Soviet response.

"Why should we say anything new, when they haven't given us a clear reading on their position?" a senior U.S. official said.

The official said Shultz will be looking particularly for a clear statement of the Soviet position on measures to verify compliance with a treaty on missiles in Europe, in addition to a clarification of recent Soviet hints that they would be willing to eliminate many if not all of their shorter-range missiles near Europe.

In discussions on an agreement banning chemical weapons, Shultz will tell the Soviets that the United States considers unacceptable a compromise British plan for inspection of suspicious activities, the officials said. The British plan, which provides for a limited right to refuse such inspections, was accepted by the Soviets during the recent Moscow visit of British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher.

The Reagan administration has insisted in chemical weapons negotiations that inspections of suspicious activities cannot be refused, but the Soviets have protested that the provision is too sweeping.